

Infant Meal Pattern Requirements

Iowa Child Care Food Program




The first year of life is divided into three; four-month age groupings with appropriate meal guidelines for each group. Although the meal pattern specifies breakfast, lunch, supper and snack, this may not match each baby's feeding pattern. Babies seldom accept rigid eating schedules and may need to eat every 2 to 4 hours. Babies should be fed when hungry or "on demand" or "on cue".

There are ranges given for food portions to allow flexibility, based on each baby's appetite. Babies vary from day-to-day in the amounts they actually eat. The amounts listed are the **minimum** you must serve to meet requirements except for breast milk. You may serve larger portions to babies who want more than these amounts. Some babies may want less and should never be forced to finish what is in the bottle or what is spoon-fed. Let babies determine how much they will eat and learn the individual cues each baby uses to show hunger or fullness.

Infants must be held when they are fed and should never be left with a propped-up bottle. Juice should not be offered to infants until they are ready to drink from a cup. Bottle feeding of juice or bedtime bottles may cause baby bottle tooth decay.

Solid foods are optional for infants four through seven months of age, and should be introduced only if the infant is developmentally ready. Solid foods should be introduced one at a time to help detect allergies.

Breast milk or iron-fortified infant formula must be served for the entire first year. If a center or home serves any infant meals, then parents of all infants under age 1 yr. must be offered the option of at least one iron fortified infant formula, which will be provided by the center or home.

<i>Age of Baby</i>	<i>Breakfast</i>	<i>Lunch and Supper</i>	<i>Snack</i>
Birth through 3 months 	4-6 fluid ounces (fl oz) breast milk ^{1,2} or formula ³	4-6 fl oz breast milk ^{1,2} or formula ³	4-6 fl oz breast milk ^{1,2} or formula ³
4 months through 7 months 	4-8 fl oz breast milk ^{1,2} or formula 0-3 Tbsp. Infant cereal ^{3,4} (optional)	4-8 fl oz breast milk ^{1,2} or formula ³ 0-3 Tbsp. Infant cereal ^{3,4} (optional) 0-3 Tbsp. fruit and/or vegetable (optional) ⁴	4-6 fl oz breast milk ^{1,2} or formula
8 months through 11 months 	6-8 fl oz breast milk ^{1,2} or formula ³ 2-4 Tbsp. Infant cereal ³ 1-4 tbsp. fruit and/or vegetable	6-8 fl oz breast milk ^{1,2} or formula ³ and 2-4 Tbsp Infant cereal ³ and/or 1-4 Tbsp. meat, fish, poultry, egg yolk, cooked dry beans or peas; or ½-2 oz. cheese; or 1-4 oz. cottage cheese, cheese food, or cheese spread; and 1-4 Tbsp. fruit and/or vegetable	2-4 fl oz breast milk ^{1,2} or formula ³ or fruit juice ⁵ 0-½ slice of bread ^{4,6} or 0-2 crackers ^{4,6} (optional)

¹It is recommended that breast milk be served in place of formula from birth through 11 months.

²For some breast-fed infants who regularly consume less than the minimum amount of breast milk per feeding, a serving of less than the minimum amount of breast milk may be offered, with additional breast milk offered if the infant is still hungry.

³Infant formula and dry infant cereal shall be iron fortified.

⁴A serving of this component is required only when the infant is developmentally ready to accept it.

⁵Fruit juice shall be full-strength.

⁶Bread and bread alternates shall be made from whole-grain or enriched meal or flour.